

sitting together and watching a sporting event with or anything else.

I don't know the full details of the tragic accident he had, but I can almost see Mike out on his bicycle, in his beautiful State, and enjoying the day. I do mourn his passage, not only as a friend but as somebody who represented what I feel the Senate has been and should be again. So I will yield the floor and only say I miss Mike Enzi.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING MIKE ENZI

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my good friend, the senior Senator from the great State of Vermont.

I, too, feel so badly about Senator Enzi's unfortunate passing. We received the very sad news this morning that Mike Enzi had passed away from injuries sustained on a bicycle accident.

He was only 7 months into his retirement, after four terms in the Senate and decades—decades—of service to his home State of Wyoming.

We will remember him as we remembered him upon his departure from this Chamber, as a kind and gentle man, as a practical legislator, someone who sought common ground and was willing to leave strained disagreements for another day. He was forceful, he was principled, but he was also gentle, a rare and unusual combination and much needed in this body.

He lived by a simple creed, given to him by his mother, that adorned his office, and he shared it with his staff: Do what you think is right; do your best; and treat others the way they wish to be treated.

Upon his retirement, those were the values he asked the Senate to remember him by. At the news of his unexpected passing, those are the values we will carry on in his memory. I offer my condolences to his wife Diana and to former Senator Enzi's entire family.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. President, now on another matter, Senate business, as Senators continue to finalize the text of the bipartisan infrastructure agreement, the Senate will process several nominations to the executive branch. Today, we will confirm Todd Kim to serve as the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the Justice Department, and, tomorrow, the Senate will vote on two nominees to the National Labor Relations Board, who I know will defend the rights and help deal with the rights of working people, so much needed today when there has been such an assault on labor and on working people in America.

Now, the votes of these nominees will in no way interfere with my ability to reconsider the vote on the motion to proceed to a debate on infrastructure. We are making good progress on both

tracks: the bipartisan infrastructure and the budget resolution with reconciliation instructions. And, to reiterate, Senators should prepare to work through the weekend in order to finish the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

JANUARY 6 COMMISSION

Now, about January 6, this morning a special committee of the House of Representatives will convene for the first time to begin an inquiry into the events of January 6. It is important we do this. January 6 was one of the darkest episodes in the history of our democracy, the first time the Capitol was breached since the War of 1812.

In both the runup and aftermath, vicious lies about our elections fueled dangerous conspiracies and mob violence. We must establish a trusted account of what transpired on January 6, what and who caused it. Not just the people in the building, as bad as they were, but many others may have been involved, as well, and I am hopeful that this inquiry will get to the bottom of that. We have to do this to make sure that such an event is never repeated.

But let me say, Mr. President, we have traveled a very sorry road to get to this place. The special committee in the House was forced into existence because Senate Republicans and Leader MCCONNELL blocked the formation of an independent commission, appointed on a bipartisan basis, to report on the events of the 6th. We had modeled it on the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, but Leader MCCONNELL stood in the way.

How did we come to such a moment? Well, in the immediate aftermath of the attack on the Capitol, the House Republican leader said that President Trump "bears responsibility." The Republican leader warned of a "death spiral" for our democracy if election lies told by the losing side were to be believed. Republicans of all stripes, many in this Chamber, demanded accountability and answers.

But, in the last 6 months, all that courage and truth-telling has evaporated into smoke. All that courage and truth-telling has evaporated into smoke. What a shame for the Republican Party. The House Republican leader deputized Members of his own party to negotiate an independent commission with Democrats, and once they did, he stabbed them in the back and instructed his Members to vote against it.

Weeks later, the House Republicans fired the only member of their leadership team willing to call out President Trump's election lies. House Republicans are now likening January 6 to a peaceful protest and a "normal tourist visit."

Again, I would commend to people the New York Times video—40 minutes—that simply documents what happened. And it is appalling to see one of the Congress Members say this was like a normal, peaceful visit when you watch the violence that occurred before your very eyes.

Here in the Senate, the Republican minority mounted a partisan filibuster

to prevent this Chamber from even debating legislation to create an independent commission. Is that amazing? Every Democratic Member was appalled that they wouldn't even let a debate on whether to have a commission go forward.

Four months, that is how long it took for House and Senate Republican leadership, who denounced former President Trump in the aftermath of January 6, who said they held him practically and morally responsible—4 months was all it took for Republican leadership to back down, turn silent, and then thwart an independent investigation into the January 6 attack.

So, today, the House begins an important task under the only circumstances that congressional Republicans would allow. I have no doubt that House Republicans will engage in efforts to discredit even this: the work of a bipartisan panel of investigators. They will dredge up the same dreary talking points. They will call it a witch hunt. They will call Republicans who participate Pelosi Republicans. They will cheapen the public discourse even more than it has already been cheapened and do their level best to sow distrust about any account of what happened on January 6.

For what? Fear of Donald Trump? The belief that their political viability hinges on whitewashing an attempted coup? Who knows.

But let the record reflect that the House will proceed with this important investigation and it will be done by Members from both parties and that it will get at the truth.

STUDENT LOANS

Mr. President, now, on student loans, final matter: Right now, across the country, there are 45 million student loan borrowers who owe \$1.7 trillion in student loan debt. In good times, paying off tens of thousands, sometimes hundreds of thousands in debt can be a crushing endeavor, particularly to younger people ready to go out in the prime of life. But during this pandemic, as Americans lost jobs and incomes, it has become even harder to pay back those loans.

Fortunately, the Federal Government provided a lifeline for tens of millions of borrowers when they ordered a pause on most Federal student loan repayments last spring. Of the many steps the government has taken to respond to the COVID crisis, this has been one of the most effective.

Unfortunately, this pause will expire in a little over 2 months, even while many student borrowers are still piecing their lives back together after the pandemic. So later today, I will join Senator WARREN and my House colleagues to call on President Biden to extend the pause on student loan payments until next spring to give Americans more time to get back on their feet.

Along with Senator WARREN, I believe that the Biden administration should go even further and cancel up to

\$50,000 in student loan debt per borrower. With the flick of a pen, President Biden could give a fresh start to tens of millions of borrowers drowning in debt—a fresh start, just what they need as the country begins a fresh start as we recover from COVID.

Today is as good a day as any to cancel student debt.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The minority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING MIKE ENZI

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate is stunned and grieving this morning. Our dear friend and former colleague Senator Mike Enzi passed away last night following a serious bike accident this past weekend.

Mike was 77 years old and only about 7 months into retirement. Our friend was blessed with a great American life, and he lived it well. Mike was hugely accomplished but at the same time humble. He was powerful; he was influential but earnest and deeply kind. He was ambitious, but on behalf of the people of Wyoming, not personal gain or glory.

Mike's quarter-century career in the U.S. Senate capped a storied career in public service. He was elected mayor of Gillette, WY, at just 30 years old. He was a young husband, running a family business, but he saw an opportunity to put his shoulder to help his neighbors.

Well, to be more precise, our former colleague and Mike's predecessor, Al Simpson, gave him a not-so-subtle nudge. It was more like conscription. Gillette needed help, and this up-and-comer was exactly what the booming town needed at that time.

Diana agreed to let Mike throw his hat in the ring, and the rest is history. The mayor's office eventually gave way to the Wyoming House, then the State senate, and then this Senate.

Here, Mike built a two-part reputation that might have struck people as contradictory. On the one hand, Mike was a principled, hard-nosed conservative. He chaired the HELP Committee and the Budget Committee with a small businessman's painstaking financial eye. In fact, when he first unpacked his office, Mike was the Senate's only trained accountant. He was central to getting generational tax reform off the starting blocks. He was a policy leader in our conference. But at the same time, this principled westerner was also universally known as one of the kindest, most thoughtful, most respectful Senators on either side of the aisle.

Mike's famous 80-20 rule helped him find bipartisan common ground on a

long list of significant issues. I know he was particularly proud of his focus on the global fight against AIDS.

On the HELP Committee, Mike cut important deals with his counterpart and ideological opposite, Ted Kennedy. Neither Senator walked away from his principles; they just wanted to find where those principles actually fit together.

Mike's policy wins were many. But at the end of the day, Mike knew what everyone else around here knew: His greatest accomplishment was winning Diana's hand and building their family together.

Their marriage, their partnership, was a Senate institution unto itself. The Enzis' kindness overflowed into legendary parties and generous gifts for the entire Senate community, especially the behind-the-scenes all-stars who do not get thanked nearly enough.

So Mike Enzi departed the Senate having changed policy and law for the better because of his mind. And now he has departed this life having changed his friends and his colleagues for the better because of his heart.

Today, the entire Senate stands in solidarity with Diana at this tragic time, which has come entirely too soon. Our prayers are with her, their three children, and their grandchildren and the entire family.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. President, on a totally different matter, while American families worry about rising costs, Washington Democrats want to embark on yet another reckless, multitrillion-dollar taxing-and-spending spree. Recent surveys show that more than 80 percent of Americans are somewhat or very worried about the rising cost of living. And 73 percent say they are worried about impending tax hikes. But our Democratic colleagues have dreamt up another reckless taxing-and-spending spree that would stick families with even higher costs, even higher taxes, and an even shakier economy.

The overall pricetag is so outrageous—outrageous—and the potential economic damage so significant that you can almost forget to look at all the terrible policies Democrats are hoping to hide behind the jaw-dropping dollar figure: blanket amnesty for illegal immigrants; pieces of their effort to take over all 50 States' election laws under false pretenses; a socialist price-setting scheme for prescription medicine that would lead to fewer new treatments, fewer new cures, and especially hurt people with rare or unusual diseases; a bill that would have "the swamp" redistributing money away from working families who don't make childcare arrangements the way Democrats want.

And then there is the huge catalog of expensive and radical Green New Deal policies that Democrats say they want to ram through as part of this spree. For example, Democrats want to use a party-line vote to slap an expensive new carbon tax on certain imports be-

fore American consumers get to buy them. That is after already sticking working families with higher prices due to inflation.

To add insult to injury, international trade experts warned this new carbon tax scheme will lead to foreign retaliation, costing our Nation jobs, wages, and economic prosperity.

It is a one-two punch, threatening the livelihoods of working families across our country. Just ask the American farmers who worry foreign retaliation will depress their grain and livestock prices while increasing their input costs like fertilizer.

Democrats also want a new set of top-down mandates that would crush the affordable forms of energy that keep Americans' lights on, heat and cool Americans' homes, put gas in Americans' cars, and provide a whole lot of American workers their jobs. They want every Senate Democrat to line up unanimously behind the most liberal plans to wage a war on fossil fuels.

I have said it before, and I will say it again. Our distinguished colleague, Chairman BERNIE SANDERS, may not have won the last Presidential primary, but on the Democratic side, it sure looks like his socialist philosophy is winning the war. House Democrats, the far left, and the administration keep floating this endless eco-socialist shopping list, and apparently, they expect every single Senate Democrat to simply fall in line.

They want to further expand job tax credit giveaways for costly electric cars when 80 percent is going to households earning six figures and up.

They also want money and mandates to push the entire Federal Government fleet toward electric cars as well. So wouldn't you just love to see an IRS auditor pull up to your tax audit in a \$97,000 Tesla?

By the way, the Biden administration's own statistics admit the comparable gas-powered vehicle would cost taxpayers tens of thousands less.

Democrats have even floated big Federal giveaways for electric schoolbuses, but zero help if rural schools need to replace a diesel bus with another diesel—just what rural school boards have been longing for.

And don't forget Democrats' discussion of using Federal dollars to remodel or reconstruct millions of homes or buildings they find insufficiently "green."

I remember a while back when Democrats won one outlet's "Lie of the Year" award for promising: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.

Maybe this year will feature a remake: If you like your house, you can keep your house.

It just does not end, Mr. President. It reads like one mass effort to upend life in places like Kentucky, West Virginia, Montana, and Iowa and all throughout the American heartland until it fits the fashions of west coast millionaires—another effort to push the